

August 20, 1995
9871 Lincoln Avenue
Clive, Iowa 50325

Thomas H. Kent
211 Richards Street
Iowa City, Iowa 52246

Dear Tom,

Pam Allen told me there were few notes on the Mississippi Kites for the Spring 1995 report.

I first sighted a Mississippi Kite this year flying high over a wooded area between 73rd Street and 75th Street in Windsor Heights at 6:15 P.M. on Monday, May 15, 1995. There is a small creek there by the name of North Walnut Creek, which feeds into Walnut Creek, which feeds into the Raccoon River. There is a private wooded preserve of 7-10 acres along this creek, in addition to many other tall, mature trees in the backyards of people living along 73rd Street.

North Walnut Creek divides W.H. + Clive. 75th is in Clive.

I pulled into the Clive Elementary School parking lot, which is next door to Olivet Baptist Church. I was able to watch the kite for a few minutes, and observed its graceful and effortless soaring and flight. The flared, dark tail was obvious, even at that height.

I immediately called Eugene and Eloise Armstrong and Pam and Reid Allen, and the IOU Hotline. The Armstrong's and Allen's were all able to see the kites the next day.

The area where they are nesting is directly east two to three blocks from Fred Crane's house in Clive, where they were first spotted in 1991, and where they were seen regularly in 1992, 1993, and seen just a few times summer of 1994. The janitor at the church claims to have seen these birds for three summers, and the woman who lives in front of the nest site thinks they have been coming there for up to 13 years. She has lived there for 29 years.

Phil Walsh is writing a documentation on the nest. The nest is located in the floodplain of North Walnut Creek in a large, old hackberry. I have an article written by Fred Crane in September, 1991, on his sighting and summer of observation of the kites. He has given permission for that article to be used in the Iowa Bird Life. I have driven around the neighborhood in winter looking for nests, but this nest is smaller than I would have expected.

Another sighting which I should pass on to you is that of a Yellow-breasted Chat. A Chat was photographed by a Roy Adolphson of Des Moines on Mother's Day, May 14, 1995 at Berry Woods, which is near Indianola. Berry Woods is a Nature Conservancy property.

page 2.

I'm sure other people reported this, but I saw Golden-winged Warblers in the Clive Greenbelt for a week starting May 11th. I saw them every day, but one, and over at least a 1/2 mile stretch. Many of them were singing. There are a lot of Ohio Buckeyes along Walnut Creek in the Greenbelt, and they seemed to be foraging in the leaves of the Buckeyes much of the time. I have not seen them in the Greenbelt for 3-4 years, and never for that long or that many.

Also spotted a Canada Warbler on May 9th in the Greenbelt and heard a Sedge Wren singing on May 9th in a grassy area adjacent to the Greenbelt.

Had a Rufous-sided Towhee on April 30th in the backyard, and for the second year, a singing Lincoln Sparrow. That was also April 30th.

Did anyone report the Sandhill Crane at Errington Marsh in late April or early May? It was spotted by Ty Smedes, wildlife photographer. I have had reports from Polk County rangers that they are seeing one in that general area in a wetland on a farm, as recently as a few weeks ago.

I realize these are very late reports, but if you want to make note of any of them, great.

Thanks!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jane R. Clark". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jane" being the most prominent part.

Jane R. Clark
(515)223-5047